
REMARKS

At the outset, Applicants' undersigned counsel gratefully acknowledges the courtesies extended to him by the Examiner during the personal interview of February 13, 2008. During the interview, the participants discussed each of the cited references and possible claim amendments.

Claims 5-34 and 37-119 are now canceled. Claims 120-131 have been added. Claims 1-4 and 120-131 are now pending. No new matter has been added.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Claims 35 and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. 4,509,516 to Richmond. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Richmond is directed to a ligament tunneling instrument. The present claims, by virtue of the foregoing amendment, are directed to an introducer needle configured to surgically introduce a urethral implant in a patient. In addition, the claims now recite structural features of the handle. Applicant submits that Richmond fails to disclose at least these features, so the rejection should be withdrawn.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

Claims 1-4, 27-31, 34, 37, 38, and 42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. 6,336,731 to Chien.¹ Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Chien teaches a field multi-use tool structure. As can be seen in Fig. 6 therein, the tool is useful for extracting a fishing hook from a fish. Claim 1 has been amended to recite certain structural features of the connector. None of these features is disclosed in Chien. For at least this reason, the rejection over this reference should be withdrawn.

¹ Rejected claims 27-31, 34, 37, 38, and 42 have been canceled by virtue of the foregoing amendment.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 32, 33, and 117-119 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly unpatentable over various combinations of cited documents. As the rejected claims have been canceled by the foregoing amendment, this rejection is deemed moot.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' undersigned counsel (678-342-4880) to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-0835

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /Brian M. Burn/
Brian M. Burn
Reg. No. 44,455